

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 112602
ORIGIN ARA-14

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 112602

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, VE

SUBJECT: ARMS RESTRAINT FOLLOW-UP
REF: CARACAS 4013

1. THIS CABLE TRANSMITS PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF FRAMEWORK PAPER (PARA 2A REFTEL). DRAFT HAS NOT REPEAT NOT YET BEEN FULLY CLEARED, BUT IS FURNISHED NOW FOR YOUR COMMENT IN VIEW OF PRESIDENT PEREZ' TIGHT DEADLINE. CLEARANCE FOR USE AS NON-PAPER AND ANY CHANGES WILL BE PROVIDED SHORTLY AS WILL OTHER PAPERS REQUESTED REFTEL, PLUS SUPPORTING STATISTICAL MATERIAL.

2. DRAFT TEXT FOLLOWS: QUOTE: REGIONAL RESTRAINT IN CON-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 112602

VENTIONAL ARMS: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

THERE ARE THREE BASIC COMPONENTS TO REGIONAL RESTRAINT:
-- CONSULTATIVE MECHANISMS;
-- NEGOTIATED GUIDELINES;
-- SUPPLIER RESTRAINT.

3. THE FIRST TWO COMPONENTS MUST IN PRACTICE DEVELOP IN STAGES OVER A PERIOD OF YEARS, IN PARALLEL INTERACTION WITH THE THIRD, RECIPROCAL RESTRAINT ON THE PART OF SUPPLIERS.

4. I. CONSULTATIVE MECHANISMS

ONCE TWO OR MORE GOVERNMENTS HAVE MADE THE BASIC POLITICAL DECISION TO SEEK A SYSTEM OF REGIONAL RESTRAINT, THE FIRST STAGE WOULD INVOLVE A SERIES OF CONSULTATIONS AT THE WORKING OR TECHNICAL LEVEL TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEMS AND MEANS FOR MAKING PRACTICAL COMPARISONS IN DEFENSE LEVELS AND SPENDING.

5. THIS INITIAL CONSULTATIVE EFFORT WOULD HAVE TWO AIMS:

(1) TO ESTABLISH THE CONCEPT OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE BILATERALLY OR MULTILATERALLY, WHICH WOULD BE THE UNDERPINNING OF WHATEVER SYSTEM EVOLVED; AND (2) TO IDENTIFY WHICH POTENTIAL GUIDELINES (OR INDICATOR FOR RESTRAINT SHOULD BE EXPLORED IN DETAIL FOR POSSIBLE ADOPTION MULTILATERALLY.

6. IN THE SECOND STAGE, REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS WOULD BECOME MORE OF A NEGOTIATING PROCESS TO DECIDE ON ACTUAL GUIDELINES FOR RESTRAINT. PARTICULAR GUIDELINES MIGHT BE ARRIVED AT IN STAGES. FOR EXAMPLE, THE FIRST SET OF GUIDELINES NEGOTIATED MIGHT BE VERY TENTATIVE, REQUIRING CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 112602

NO HARD COMMITMENT ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENTS INVOLVED BUT INDICATING INTENTIONS. WHEN THE COUNTRIES HAD LIVED WITH THESE INITIAL GUIDELINES FOR A WHILE, THEY MIGHT MOVE TOWARD MORE DEFINITIVE GUIDELINES, PERHAPS WITH SOME PHASING WRITTEN INTO THEM.

7. IN THE THIRD OR FINAL STAGE, THE CONSULTATIVE PROCESS WOULD BECOME ESTABLISHED AS A MORE DURABLE AND INTEGRAL PART OF A SYSTEM OF REGIONAL RESTRAINT. IT COULD INVOLVE A MIXTURE OF POLITICAL AND MILITARY COMMITTEES OR EXPERTS GROUPS. THE FUNCTIONS OF THIS CONTINUING CONSULTATIVE MECHANISM WOULD INCLUDE REFINEMENT AND INTERPRETATION OF THE GUIDELINES WORKED OUT IN THE NEGOTIATING STAGE.

8. II. GUIDELINES

THE GUIDELINES COMPONENT OF A REGIONAL RESTRAINT SYSTEM WOULD IDENTIFY AGREED STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR FOR THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED. NATURALLY, GUIDELINES COULD ONLY BEGIN TO EVOLVE AFTER THE PRELIMINARY CONSULTATIVE PROCESS HAD ESTABLISHED A CONSENSUS ON THE DESIRABILITY OF RESTRAINT. HOWEVER, ONE SHOULD FROM THE BEGINNING HAVE AN IDEA OF THE

TYPES OF GUIDELINES THAT THE PROCESS WOULD BE AIMING FOR. EARLY CONSULTATIONS SHOULD AIM IN PARTICULAR, TO IDENTIFY THOSE GUIDELINES THAT COULD BE MORE READILY INSTITUTED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH.

9. TO FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STABLE MILITARY BALANCE, GUIDELINES SHOULD DEAL WITH THREE BASIC INDICATORS OF MILITARY PROCUREMENT: QUALITY, QUANTITY AND SPENDING. A COMBINATION OF GUIDELINES IN THESE THREE AREAS, DEVELOPED GRADUALLY IN PHASES, COULD ALLOW THE KIND OF FLEXIBILITY NECESSARY TO ACCOMMODATE DISPARITIES AMONG THE STATES INVOLVED.

10. 1. QUALITATIVE LIMITATIONS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 112602

LIMITATIONS ON SPECIFIC TYPES OF WEAPONS WOULD, IN GENERAL, RESTRAIN THE RATE OF INCREASED SOPHISTICATION OF DEFENSE FORCES IN THE REGION. IN ORDER TO ACCOUNT FOR DISPARITY AMONG THE PARTIES AND TO ALLOW FOR APPROPRIATE MODERNIZATION OVER TIME, QUALITATIVE LIMITATIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE FLEXIBLE AND JUDGMENTAL, THAT IS, SUBJECT TO CONTINUING INTERPRETATION. SUCH LIMITATIONS WOULD THUS DEPEND A GREAT DEAL ON THE CONSULTATIVE SYSTEM.

11. QUALITATIVE LIMITATIONS MIGHT BE APPROACHED IN TWO DISTINCT CATEGORIES:

I - WEAPONS OR TYPES OF WEAPONS THAT ALL COUNTRIES OF THE REGION COULD AGREE ARE BEYOND THEIR DEFENSIVE NEEDS. WEAPONS OR SYSTEMS IN THIS CATEGORY WOULD NOT BE ACQUIRED BY ANY PARTIES TO THE RESTRAINT SYSTEM.

II - WEAPONS OR SYSTEMS WHICH WOULD CREATE NEW CAPABILITIES THAT MIGHT BE REGIONALLY DESTABILIZING. WEAPONS IN THIS CATEGORY WOULD NOT BE BANNED, BUT THEIR ANTICIPATED ACQUISITION WOULD TRIGGER PRIOR CONSULTATIONS AMONG THE REGIONAL PARTIES. WITHIN THESE CONSULTATIONS, IT WOULD BE DECIDED WHETHER SUCH A PURCHASE WOULD CAUSE DESTABILIZING REACTIONS IN THE REGION LIKELY TO HARM THE RESTRAINT SYSTEM.

12. BECAUSE OF THE ENORMOUS TASK OF INTERPRETING AND DEFINING SOPHISTICATION AMONG STATES AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF DEFENSE TECHNOLOGY, QUALITATIVE LIMITATIONS WOULD HAVE TO DEVELOP OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME, PERHAPS WITH PHASING BUILT INTO THEM. FOR EXAMPLE, THE COUNTRIES MIGHT AGREE NOT TO PURCHASE CERTAIN TYPES OF WEAPONS FOR A PERIOD OF
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 STATE 112602

FIVE YEARS, AND TO REVIEW THEIR POSITION AFTER FIVE YEARS. THIS WOULD ALLOW STABILIZATION IN AT LEAST SELECTED AREAS, AND THEN A GUARANTEE OF DEBATE AND THINKING TWICE BEFORE EMBARKING ON A NEW GENERATION OF TECHNOLOGY.

13. 2. QUANTITATIVE LIMITATIONS

QUANTITATIVE LIMITATIONS ON DEFENSE PROCUREMENT WOULD SIMILARLY HAVE TO EVOLVE OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME AND AFTER A SUBSTANTIAL PROCESS OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND DEFINITION OF ISSUES. THE PROCESS OF CONSULTATION AND COMPARISON SHOULD AIM, IN PARTICULAR, TO IDENTIFY QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS FOR SITUATIONS THAT ARE REGIONALLY UNBALANCING AND FOR MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE RATES OF PROCUREMENT FOR MODERNIZATION OR REPLACEMENT IN DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF WEAPONS. THE GUIDELINES THAT EVOLVED FROM THIS PROCESS MIGHT UTILIZE MODERNIZATION AND REPLACEMENT RATES AS THE INDICATOR FOR QUANTITATIVE LIMITATIONS. THE GUIDELINES MIGHT ALSO GO THROUGH VARIOUS PHASES OF SPECIFICITY AS THE SYSTEM EVOLVED OVER THE YEARS, BEGINNING WITH AGREEMENT TO REPORT ANNUALLY ON ARMS ACQUISITIONS.

14. 3. LIMITATION ON DEFENSE SPENDING

THE ULTIMATE GUIDELINE FOR DEFENSE SPENDING MIGHT BE TO HOLD TO A SPECIFIED PERCENTAGE OF GNP. HOWEVER, THE EVOLUTION OF SUCH A GUIDELINE MIGHT REQUIRE MANY YEARS. THE FIRST STEP WOULD BE CONSULTATIONS AT THE TECHNICAL LEVEL TO ESTABLISH FIRM BASES FOR COMPARISON. FROM THIS A SYSTEM OF ANNUAL REPORTING MIGHT DEVELOP. EVENTUALLY, FROM ACCUMULATED DATA AND TRENDS, AN APPROPRIATE PERCENTAGE OF GNP MIGHT BE IDENTIFIED AND A SPECIFIC GUIDELINE FRAMED. IF THERE WERE COUNTRIES WITHIN THE SYSTEM THAT EXCEEDED THAT PERCENTAGE OF GNP, THEY MIGHT AGREE TO REDUCE GRADUALLY OVER A SPECIFIED PERIOD OF TIME.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 06 STATE 112602

15. III. SUPPLIER RECIPROCITY

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SYSTEM OF REGIONAL RESTRAINT SHOULD HELP STIMULATE SUPPLIER RESTRAINT IN PARALLEL FASHION AND LEAD ULTIMATELY TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EXPLICIT SUPPORTIVE MEASURES ON THE PART OF SUPPLIERS.

16. THERE ARE SEVERAL FUNCTIONS THAT SUPPLIERS COULD USE-
FULLY SERVE EITHER INDIVIDUALLY OR COLLECTIVELY TO SUPPORT
A REGIONAL RESTRAINT ARRANGEMENT:

-- POSSIBLE INVOLVEMENT AT SOME STAGE IN THE REGIONAL
CONSULTATIVE PROCESS;

-- RESTRAINT IN THE PROMOTION OF NEW WEAPONS SALES;

-- ASSURANCES TO ABIDE BY THE REGIONALLY-AGREED LIMITATIONS
WHEN CONSIDERING TRANSFERS;

-- ASSURANCES NOT TO RESPOND TO ARMS REQUESTS FROM APOSTATE
MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL GROUP;

-- SPECIAL ASSISTANCE WITH EARLY WARNING CAPABILITY TO
REASSURE NATIONS COOPERATING IN THE RESTRAINT ARRANGE-
MENT;

-- ASSURANCES TO RECOGNIZE THE LEGITIMATE DEFENSE NEEDS OF
THE REGION. END QUOTE VANCE

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